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Taft, William Howard

Economic and political summary of the...

[Philadelphia, Pa.]

[1915]

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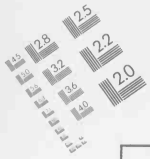
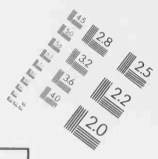
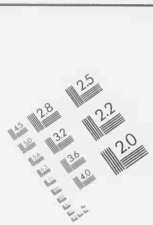
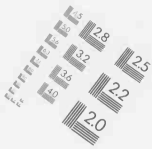

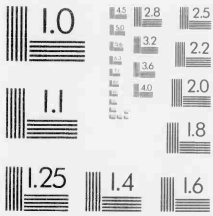

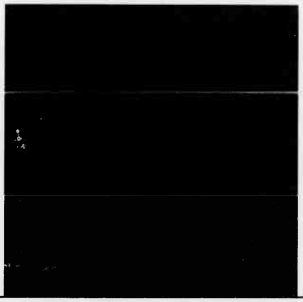

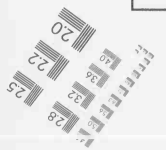
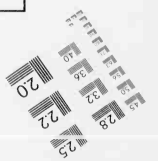

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An Address

Made by

HONORABLE WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

at

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana,
Thursday, January 21, 1915

Economic and Political Summary of the Generation Just Closing

Sent out with the Compliments of George H. Paine, Philadelphia

ADDRESS OF WILLIAM H. TAFT AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY, BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 1915.

It has seemed to me appropriate this morning to invite your attention to the consideration of some of the important political and social currents since the Civil War. That struggle was the climax of a controversy that rent the country over the moral issue of slavery, and we did not really recover from its effect for more than a decade after peace was declared. The pseudo-prosperity that the currency inflation gave us, and the panic and depression of 1873, were sequels of the war and were part of the cost. When specie payments were resumed in 1878, the country was restored to a normal condition, and from that day the subsequent business growth of our country on a sound basis began. From that time, for more than a quarter of a century, our material expansion has exceeded anything in history. The settlement of the unoccupied lands of the west, the spread of agriculture, the construction of railroads, the growth of industries and the development of all our national resources have doubled and redoubled our wealth until its statistical description is monotonous. One of the important elements in this progress has been that of combination and organization. The field of invention in the industrial arts has been a great one, and the combination of mechanical elements into complicated devices has often added a hundred fold or more to the power of production of a single laborer. In no field has the ingenuity of the American shown its exceptional character so much as in this of invention and discovery.

In the use of capital, too, the possibility of saving by enlargement and organization of equipment and plant has been demonstrated. The little rills and streams of the savings of the wage-earners and those of moderate means have been directed into reservoirs of immense capital funds, which under the management of men of executive genius have metamorphosed our manufacturing industries and our transportation systems, and have reduced in a way we hardly realize the cost of production. By this principle of combination our citizens have been given a larger power *per capita* of producing wealth than ever before in the history of the world.

In the progress that civilization makes, however, new evils appear as concomitants of our advance, and new problems are presented and new remedies are made a necessity. The tremendous power which the combination of capital

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gives to the comparatively few persons who must control its use, if that use is to be effective, tempts them to an abuse of the power. The rapid growth of wealth between 1880 and 1900 absorbed the attention of all our people. Material development became the cry, and the settlement and expansion of the country became the one great popular ideal. It was growth and size that we were aiming at. It was the invitation of capital to investment that seemed the highest good. We were all absorbed in the chase for the dollar. Professions became commercialized and the success of a man was measured more by his ability or luck in amassing money than by his character or public usefulness. It was an age of the formation of great corporations, and then of the combination of these great corporations again into mammoth trusts. In the newer country, to induce rapid development, legislatures and municipal bodies parted with special privileges and did not guard their use or their retention, with any care as to the future public weal.

This principle of combination was found quite as applicable to politics and party government as to machinery and capital. By the use of patronage and the use of money, bosses established their power and created machines that worked with the same force and accuracy and smoothness as a Corliss engine or a Standard Oil Trust.

The great corporations found it useful first to restrain hostile legislation and then to secure affirmative legislation giving them undue advantage in the conduct of their business. The time came when it was possible in some great corporations for the officers and directors to issue with the same nonchalance and certainty of their being complied with, orders for steel rails or industrial equipment, on the one hand, or for the delivery of delegates in a state, county or national political convention, on the other.

In the early years of this century the people became fully aroused to the fact that they were almost in the grasp of a plutocracy. Warnings had come to them in the decade before, and effort had been made by legislation of a tentative character to meet the anticipated danger, but it was not until the decade between 1900 and 1910 that the full force of the threatened control over our government and our politics and our business became clear to them. The agitation grew to be nation wide, the indignation of the people became acute, the demand for appropriate legislative and executive action became imperative, and the effect upon our politics and our business was made manifest.

The interstate commerce law, passed in 1887, was the first legislation in our history in which Congress had exercised in any full measure the control that the constitution gave it over our interstate railroad system. It was seen that the arterial circulation of our interstate transportation was tainted with unjust discrimination in favor of the largest shippers who were able to use this unlawful preference to suppress their less powerful competitors and to enrich their coffers with unlawful gains. The law did not, however, entrust sufficiently broad and direct powers to the Interstate Commerce Commission which it created, and the railroads blown with pride treated the Commission with derision and flaunted their defiance of its orders in the face of the people. Amendment after amendment followed, and for more than two decades, the controversy went on between the railroads and the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the Government until the weakling board of 1887 grew into the powerful tribunal of 1910, and the railroads found themselves brought under complete governmental control.

This history of the interstate commerce law and its enforcement contains one of the most useful lessons to those who would defy the people in the pride of intrenched power. It may take years but "all the people can not be fooled all the time". I listened to a most interesting speech by the worthy President of a railroad that has been brought to grief through the headstrong defiance of popular will by his predecessor, in which he set forth in plaintive but forcible language the present subjection of the railroads to official regulation. I could not but contrast his manner and matter with what his predecessor would have presented to such an audience ten years ago.

A similar change can be traced in the effect and enforcement of the anti-trust law, though this has been brought about in the course of judicial interpretation and decision rather than by amendment. In 1890 Congress passed the Sherman Act to forbid restraints of interstate trade in the forms of trust and monopoly, leaving to the courts to enforce the law and interpret its general terms. The first decision was unfortunately narrow and the great industrial and railroad combinations repeated the error which had been made in respect to the interstate commerce law, and flouted the new measure. It took twenty years of executive prosecution and judicial construction to show the power that was in the law, and today no investment is made, no combination is carried through without the utmost anxiety and care on

the part of those who are promoting it, to avoid violation of the terms of that comprehensive statute.

In politics the name of the machine has become anathema. The cry that a candidate is supported by the bosses has been in the last decade often sufficient to carry the popular vote against him. There has been a tremendous rousing of the public opinion and popular political action. Corporations have been driven out of politics, and while of course corruption is not ever absent, the danger of plutocracy has disappeared and the purification of politics has constituted a real reform for which all good citizens must be grateful.

Popular indignation can not be really roused or the leviathan of the people be stirred to action such as they have thus taken and stop short at the line of wise moderation. Part of the cost of the original disease is in the incidental damage from the inevitable excess or remedy. The hostility of legislatures and of Congress consciously or unconsciously has come to be directed against all successful investment of capital without discrimination. The inquisitorial and nagging character of the powers of commissions created for the close supervision of corporate activities has so frightened capital as to shrink investments and stop normal expansion in the business of the country. No one is so timid as controllers of capital and no persons are so easily able to take care of what they control. A hostile spirit manifested in legislation buttons up their pockets.

The sad feature of such excess of remedy, however well intended, is that the persons who suffer most are those who are least able to bear suffering, the wage-earners whose comfort and living are dependent upon regular employment. In time of great prosperity, when wages are good, and employment constant, and everybody is comfortable and smug with a consciousness of power, there is a full opportunity for the play of the forces of class jealousy and discontent with inequality, and the popular delusion spreads, that legislation can do anything. Schemes for forcing, not equality of opportunity, but equality of conditions, are proposed. Measures are adopted to strike at the successful without distinction as to whether their success is dependent upon legitimate methods or otherwise.

The close and absolute supervision over the management of railroads and the restriction upon their rates, together with the increase, or the maintenance, of wages through the power of the trades-unions have ground the railroads between the upper and nether millstone and pre-

vented a fair return upon their capital. The solvency of some is threatened and all this is to the detriment of the business of the country, and especially to the comfort and happiness of wage-earners dependent on normal business and a normal demand for labor.

We are all in the same boat. The prosperity of each class is largely dependent on the prosperity of all. The bad conditions of one class reacts upon that of all the others. This is no reason why we should not repress injustice and take away its opportunity and punish abuse of power. But it is a reason why we should not indulge in excess and injure all classes by injustice to one.

But the people of the United States are intelligent. When they suffer in the discipline of adversity brought on by their own mistakes, they are quick to see them and to remedy them, and such excesses as I have described are only the natural outcome of the just indignation that was excited by capitalistic abuse of power and we must look now to a retracing of our steps to the line of moderation and justice.

We must grant increased rates to the railroads when the conditions require it and grant them quickly. Their prosperity is important to the prosperity of the country. Their needs constitute a substantial per cent. of the demand for our manufactured goods. Millions own their stock. They employ millions of men.

We must not allow the outrageous injustice to continue by which we inaugurate the real reform of parcel post and do it at the cost of the railroads by compelling them to carry the enormous increase of traffic for nothing.

We should repeal the full crew bills that impose upon the railroad companies the burden of employing unnecessary labor.

In retracing our steps to cure these excesses, there is no reason why we should not maintain the real progress that we have made in disenthroning plutocrats and in making those who choose to exercise public franchises serve the public for not more than a reasonable profit.

Another most successful instance of the application of the principle of combination has been seen in the development of trades-unions. Wage-earners, especially those engaged in skilled manual labor, have united in a common cause, have organized, have appointed leaders to represent them in the inevitable friction of interests between labor

and employers as to the terms and conditions of employment. No change in our social condition, it seems to me has been more beneficial on the whole to the working men than has this resort to the power of combination among them. There is no doubt that at common law the rules governing the relation of the employee and the employer were framed in the interest of the employer. The single employee was at great disadvantage in seeking favorable terms of employment or in maintaining them. By union, however, the wage-earners have been able to place themselves upon an equality of dealing with their employers. By joint contributions, they create funds which maintain them pending disputes over terms. Their quitting employment in a body has proven a real inconvenience and a real interference with the employer's prosperity, which makes it a powerful leverage in maintaining their reasonable demands. On a rising market the combination of laborers can compel their employers to give a just share of the increased profit of their joint product in the form of advanced wages, and on a falling market they can restrain the employer from undue haste in making a cut. Of course wages are determined in a free market by the law of supply and demand and no combination can ultimately avoid an adjustment in accord with that economic law. But in the meantime trades-unions can protect the workman against the undue haste and greed of employers.

The trades-unions have secured great benefit to their members because of the political power they have exercised. This they have been able to wield not because they constitute a majority of the community, for the members of trades-unions and organized labor are very much in the minority even among wage-earners; but they are a forceful, well-directed, compact body, active and influential in every local community, as well as in the nation at large and are supposed to hold a balance of power in many legislative and congressional districts. They have been able to moderate the severity of the common law against their class, to impose upon employers obligations in respect to the safety and health of the place of labor, and the use of safety appliances in dangerous employment, to abolish the inequitable fellow servant rule and to obtain workmen's compensation acts insuring the workmen against disabling accident. Some of these workmen's compensation acts are crude and unjust in operation, but the principle has been accepted and I doubt not in the course of time when properly worked out, they

will inure to the benefit not only of the employee, but the employer and the community.

These are the advantages of trades-unions. We should know that they have come to stay and to remain powerful factors in the progress of the community. But evil tendencies have appeared in such combinations just as in combination of capital. Trades-unionism has tended to create a deal level of industry and skill among wage-earners. By securing the same pay for the good worker and the poor one it takes away the motive in the individual working man for greater industry and higher skill. These tendencies, we may hope, trades-unions themselves will ultimately seek to mitigate and neutralize for their own good.

But the chief ground for criticising the recent policy of trades-unions is the fact that the power they have legitimately acquired by combination and have properly used for the betterment of their conditions, they are now attempting to abuse by seeking to place organized labor in a privileged class. Congress and legislatures have not deemed it necessary to take the same pains to impose detailed restrictions upon the possible abuse of the power of trades-unions as in the case of railroad companies and trusts. To those who are injured by the abuse of their power by trades-unions, ordinary principles of law offer remedies which are probably sufficient. But the unions are not content with this freedom from special legislative restriction. They are demanding from legislatures and from Congress that common law and equitable remedies be suspended against their methods of industrial warfare, which have been declared to be illegal by the courts. They have succeeded in some of the states, as they have succeeded in England. They have partially succeeded in Congress, but not as fully as their leaders represent, in the passage of what is called the Clayton Act.

The Anthracite Coal Commission, appointed by President Roosevelt, which settled the anthracite coal strike, and which contained a representative of organized labor upon it, made a report that the compound boycott was one of the most cruel and illegal instruments that could be evoked in a labor dispute, and they strongly condemned it. There are three kinds of boycott—the primary boycott, the secondary boycott and the compound boycott, so-called. When a body of workmen withdraw from employment and notify their employer that unless he complies with their demand they will not work for him, nor will they patronize him in any way—that is what is called a primary boycott. It is legal

and always has been. They may use the normal inconvenience that such withdrawal from employment and withholding of custom enable them to inflict on the employer to induce him to a compliance with their terms. When they enlarge the field of inconvenience to him by trying to persuade others to sympathize with them and join them in withholding custom or valuable association of any sort from the employer, they are engaged in a secondary boycott.

The Clayton Bill in my judgment makes legal a secondary boycott of this description and it thus authorizes the use of an instrument in industrial warfare that may work unjust hardship.

The compound boycott, however, is much more dangerous to the community and it would be a serious public injury to make it legal. It seeks to draw into the controversy by compulsion members of the community who have no normal relation to the issue between the contestants in the labor dispute.

A is an employer and B is the body of the employes in a trade-union and C is a customer of A. If the B trade-union has a labor dispute with A, and B notifies C that he must withhold his custom from A, or B will boycott him also, this is a compound boycott, both against A and C.

It was illegal at common law and gave an action for damages to both C and A and was a criminal conspiracy, punishable as a misdemeanor. Its evil is in the opportunity by moral duress it gives the striking and boycotting workmen to involve the whole community in the fight and array them against A.

The Supreme Court of the United States has held that such a compound boycott used to destroy the interstate trade of a hat manufacturer in Danbury, Connecticut, was a violation of the Anti-Trust Act and has sustained a judgment for $225,000 against members of the trade-union which carried on the boycott. In my judgment there is nothing in the Clayton Act passed last year which would prevent a similar judgment for similar acts in the future.

We in the past found corporations exercising undue privileges to the disadvantage of the people which the people in the enthusiasm of material expansion had unwisely granted them, and now in the reaction we find that the movement toward curtailment of their powers has gone beyond the median line, has resulted in injustice to them and injury to the community. On the other hand, we found that the wage-earner class was suffering from a fundamental and unjust disadvantage in dealing individually with capital. In

order to put them on an equality with their employers so that they might secure a proper share of the joint product of labor and capital, it was necessary to recognize the legality of combination among them. Through the power that they have been exercising, they now seek to obtain undue privilege.

We are now halting in business and progress and are learning the unwise steps we have taken that need retracing. We need not go back to the conditions that led to the great reform and we shall not do so. But we should go back to the line of justice and equity.

Another most important development in this country has been an attack upon our representative system of government as the cause of the corporate and corrupt control of politics. It was said that the system involved the selection of agents by the people to act for them in executive and legislative work who too often proved faithless, and that the only method of carrying on the government safely was to dispense with legislative agents and let the people legislate directly. A most formidable wave of public opinion in favor of such a change has swept the country and has found expression in the initiative and the referendum. After a study of the working of these innovations, I do not hesitate to say that it proves the unwisdom of such changes. If it be true that a people have not information and intelligence to select from their own number competent and honest agents to do their work, they certainly have not the capacity to perform the much more difficult task of passing useful judgment on statutes, frequently difficult to construe or understand. Again the duty imposed upon the people in legislating by initiative and referendum is so much more burdensome than that imposed by the representative system in selecting agents to do this work that the majority of the voters too frequently refuse to perform their electoral duties and thus leave to a minority of the electorate, the decision of important questions submitted by referendum. The majority of the electorate thus show that they do not approve the reference to them of such difficult questions. The statistics show that at the same election at which officers are to be elected, and measures referred are to be voted upon, the proportion of those who vote upon the measures is rarely more than 60 per cent. of those who vote for candidates and not infrequently is as low as 25 or 30 per cent. thereof. In the election in 1912 in Oregon the electors were called upon to vote upon the question of adopting 31 complicated statutes.

In order to explain the issue thus presented, the state published a volume containing 250 closely printed pages and circulated it among the voters. I ask this intelligent audience to look into their hearts and answer me truly and say how many of them in preparation for such an election would read diligently through that volume of 250 printed pages. It would be on subjects with many of which they were not familiar. Much or all of it would be the driest kind of reading. Then I ask those who think they would read such publication, how many of them after reading it would think their judgment upon the statutes worth anything.

The initiative gives the power to anyone who can induce five per cent. of the electorate to sign his petition, to frame a legislative bill and compel its submission to the electorate and this without amendment or discussion as to form. It is a great burden upon the electors and eliminates all possibility of that wise adaptation to the real public needs that illuminating discussion and reframing so often give to bills when they are passed by Congress or a state legislature.

The business of legislation is an expert matter. It is something that requires a knowledge of the meaning of legal terms. It often requires the taking of evidence in order to determine what the real evil is to be remedied and how much a remedy can be formulated. Legislators even if they are not trained lawyers, acquire excellent judgment as to the merits of bills by reason of their experience and the full opportunity and time they have to study the bills, and from the calm and informing discussion of their details. This is impossible with the general public. It is just as absurd to propose to build a bridge without engineers, to build a house without an architect or a competent contractor as to propose detailed legislation by votes at a popular election. This is not to impeach the intelligence of the electorate. It is only to recognize the limitations upon men in doing something which under the conditions no degree of intelligence will enable them to do.

The pure Democracy attempted in Athens proved to be a failure and government in those days was so much simpler than in our cities and states that even a temporary success in such a community would not justify a resort to the same method now. The town meeting in our New England States was a form of direct government adopted when the necessities of village and town government were few and when almost anybody could discharge the duties of any office. Yet those Puritan ancestors of ours the moment their villages became three or four in number turned to the

representative system. The General Courts of Massachusetts and of Connecticut and of Rhode Island and of all other New England states evidence their conviction that the town meeting system is inapplicable to a community of any considerable size, especially to a community in which the people live in different settlements remote from the seat of government.

The institution of Recall deals with the executive and judicial branches of the government. With both, its operation is injurious to the public service, though in the case of Judges it is much more dangerous.

If an executive officer is dishonest, he can in effect be recalled by impeachment or by criminal trial and conviction and sentence to the penitentiary. Under the new system of recall an honest official before he has had time to work out and vindicate his policies may be ousted by an ambitious rival through misrepresentation in the press and the hasty judgment of the part of the electorate who go to the polls. The necessary tendency of such a system is to prevent his adopting any affirmative policy at all, to discharge his duties in a colorless way, to restrain all energy and enterprise, and to keep him with his ear to the ground to enable him to avoid the doing of anything that shall arouse discussion. It adds greatly to the tyranny of a reckless and unscrupulous press. It necessarily discourages enterprise and originality and real effort for reform because no reform was ever initiated that did not stimulate misrepresentation to obstruct its successful inauguration. Under such a system Lincoln would have been recalled.

The evil of the recall of judges and judicial decisions is, however, much greater. The tenure of a Judge or the right of the individual litigants is to depend on the chance and uncertainty of one popular election. In the nature of the case, the people can not be advised of the legal arguments *pro* and *con* even if they could understand them. Again the power of a reckless press would be enhanced and justice and equity would play little part in the result.

The evil tendency of such so-called reforms is in the destruction of the sanctity of our constitution. Under the initiative and referendum, no greater consideration by the people is required in the passage of a constitutional amendment than in that of any temporary and unimportant measure. A bill of rights and an appropriations bill in such a procedure rest upon the same sanction. The success of our popular government, in promoting the happiness of all

the people, depends upon the justice and equity with which it reconciles the right and power of the whole people with the rights of minority and of individuals. Such justice and equity has been obtained by the adoption of a written constitution and the interpretation and enforcement of it by an independent judiciary whom the people took pains to surround with every protection against popular passion or congressional or executive restraint. The system of representative government is an institution hammered out in the struggle for liberty by our Anglo-Saxon ancestors for eight hundred years. The system of written constitutions and an independent judiciary has vindicated itself in the strenuous life of the Republic for one hundred and twenty-five years and there is nothing in the actual results of the initiative, referendum and recall that commend them as a substitute.

What is true with respect to the state is true with respect to the party. Parties are essential to popular government. In no other way practically can the will of all the electorate be interpreted and embodied in affirmative action, legislative and executive. The selection of candidates by a party is a matter in which the community may properly take an interest and with respect to which the legislature may properly pass laws to prevent abuses that have arisen in party government. But the question which I moot is whether the selection of candidates at a general primary has tended to the elimination of corruption or political machine rule and the selection of better representatives of a party. I say without hesitation that it has not. Certainly it has not with respect to the many offices to which it applies, when the persons to be selected are not persons of whose qualification the public can in the nature of things have any intimate knowledge. The standard of judges in those states where the candidates are selected by a general primary has notably and perceptibly become inferior to those who were selected under the old convention system.

The convention system gave rise to abuses. Bosses and machines were able to control the convention, but even under the worst boss and the worst machine the convention was a body with a sense of some responsibility growing out of its desire to nominate a ticket which would win in the election; and therefore while it may have nominated many machine candidates whose selection did not make for the public interest, it frequently nominated men of strength and popularity and high character in order that the ticket might be a vote getting one. Under the system of the general primary there is no such responsibility. Especially is this true in the

selection of the subordinate offices. Circumstances of no real or proper significance in the selection of qualified candidates affect the choice in such cases. If the initial letter of the candidate's name comes early in the alphabet, and he is first in the list of candidates, he may receive thousands of votes more than the man whose name begins with W. Anything that gives a man notoriety or conspicuousness in the community, however unimportant in showing his qualifications, attracts votes to him because the voters have no other means of identifying or discriminating between the many candidates. The man who advertises himself most in the newspapers has a great advantage. The general primary in the opportunity which it offers to the use of money in organizing a campaign, expended, not corruptly but merely in giving a publicity to the candidate, greatly increases the power of money. I have known man after man, worthy of party preference, who has declined to enter a primary contest because of the financial burden that a successful issue imposed.

Nor is it true that the general primary is any less subject to the control of a machine and the boss and a political organization than a convention. Primaries are usually attended by a minority of the party. In other words, the result is much affected by the number who can be aroused to come out to vote and that depends upon organization. This places in the hands of the politicians who have an organization, the means to control in ordinary campaigns.

In America we have been greatly influenced by the success that our people have shown in the invention of machines to reduce the amount of labor needed and the cost of production and we can not get over the idea that political evils can be remedied by a change in political machinery. I don't mean to say that one form of machinery in politics is not better than another, but I do mean to say that every one will fail, or will suffer in its operation if the electorate do not perform their electoral duties. The representative system in legislatures and in conventions system will work well if the people who ought to vote will turn out and it will work for the reasons I have stated a great deal better than the initiative and referendum and the general primary. But we should realize under any system the politicians will control, if the people fail in their electoral duties. These so-called reforms and their popularity are a sincere expression of the desire of the people to make short cuts and to avoid the evils of a failure of the people to do their duties. It is a futile policy as experience is showing. We find the

so-called bosses still controlling under the general primary and we find the reformers as bitter against the result of the general primaries when they are defeated as they were against the convention. We may therefore expect a wise reaction from this attempted infusion of "more democracy to cure the evils of present democracy".

Another marked tendency of this generation is the growth of the spirit of universal brotherhood. It has shown itself in the sense of responsibility that rich men who have accumulated great fortunes, have manifested in enormous donations to every variety of philanthropic activity. They have shown this not only by the size of these countributions but by the foresight and labor with which they have formulated the provisions and created the instrumentalities for their useful application. But not among the rich alone has this feeling spread. The organization of all sorts of charitable societies and the unselfish activities and devotion of people of moderate or very limited means to help their stumbling brethren and sisters are apparent on every hand. The awakened interest on the part of the many in public matters, the organization of thousands of women's clubs for the discussion of subjects of public interest, and for the promoting of plans for municipal and other kinds of community improvement are manifest to every observer. The churches too have minimized doctrinal differences and have united and stand shoulder to shoulder in a common effort to make the spirit of religion the hand maiden of the moral uplift and of the spread of the fraternal spirit. The people have halted in their mad rush for dollars and have become ashamed of their previous absorption in material matters and are now seeking to show to the unfortunate who have not shared in the general prosperity, their interest in them and their desire to help them on.

The same spirit shows itself in the trend of legislation which has assumed a much more paternal character than that of a quarter of a century ago when the doctrines of the laissez faire school of government seemed to be controlling. It is quite possible that in this enthusiasm many foolish things have been done. A movement of this kind can not be carried on without developing an hysteria that promotes silly projects; but those are the mere excrescences and excesses in a movement of real progress in humanity that every lover of his kind must welcome. The suggestion that by legislation we can all lift ourselves by the boot straps, can abolish poverty, can distribute fortunes and produce a universal level of happiness is the dream of the

socialist. Many schemes of uplift whose authors deny that they are socialists are equally unsound. They are an evidence of this spread of the fraternal feeling although they promise no practical good and may involve obstruction to real progress in the waste of public activities, in the squandering of public funds and in a useless increase in the burden of taxation.

This new fraternal feeling is not limited by national boundaries. The people of the world are closer to each other. They are taking more interest in each other's welfare. Those of us that dreamed of universal peace have had a dreadful shock in this awful cataclysm that has come to Europe; but even that has developed the world wide interest in the welfare of peoples and has shown by the general sympathy with the suffering of all the belligerents, how much more united the peoples of the world are than they ever were before. The vast sums that are being contributed, the many activities that are being carried on among our people to relieve the wounded and starving of all the nations through the Red Cross and other agencies far exceed anything that history has shown in the past and are as much greater in their extent as this war is greater than any previous war in the history of the world.

The war, the ending of which no man can now see, staggers the imagination in the loss of life and in the destruction of hard-earned capital that its probable long continuance must involve. When it came, it was such a shock and such a disappointment that those who hoped for human progress lost their faith. But as it grows to be an older story and we bring our philosophy to bear on the facts, we find occasion for hope in the very suffering which when the war is over, will prompt the adoption of some peaceable means of settling international disputes to prevent a recurrence of such an awful catastrophe.

I am an optimist. The differences between a crank and an optimist it seems to me is not in their ideals, for an optimist may have as high ideals as a crank, but a crank is a man who believes that his ideals can be realized tomorrow by legislation and has no interest except in their instant accomplishment. He is not willing to wait the slow growth in the character of the individual which must be the foundation of all human progress. The optimist believes his ideals are only attainable by indomitable struggle and never ending patience; but that so much are they to be desired that every effort toward them is life giving, and every real advance however gradual, is worth while.

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